

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 991
By Overbey

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Stan Ballard of Blount County.

WHEREAS, this legislative body is humbled to recognize the courage and perseverance of those admirable citizens of our State who face tragedy with a stalwart and fortified will and, through their hardship, remain faithful witnesses to the power of love and the strength of their unshakable faith in God; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable man from our State is Stan Ballard, who succumbed to mouth cancer a few days before Christmas in 2005 following a valiant fight of the initial diagnosis and four devastating reoccurrences; throughout the ten years of his heroic battle with this persistent terminal illness, Mr. Ballard kept his family going with his understanding of God's grace and his own competitive spirit and enduring attitude of hope; and

WHEREAS, a Blount County native, Stan Ballard attended William Blount High School and Roane State Community College before transferring to Maryville College, where he played basketball and graduated with a degree in education; in 1983, he was named Blount County Basketball Player of the Year; and

WHEREAS, Stan Ballard coached basketball first as an assistant at Oak Ridge High School, and then built the Oliver Springs High School team into a State power before moving to Morristown West High School; his high school coaching career was the fulfillment of a lifelong dream, and brought him the opportunity to leave a singular and indelible mark on the lives of the students he coached, his colleagues, and all who were fortunate to know him; and

WHEREAS, Stan Ballard never chewed tobacco or smoked, yet he was a victim of mouth cancer; he received a diagnosis of squamous cell carcinoma during his employment at Oliver Springs High School; and

WHEREAS, following two surgeries and several chemotherapy treatments, Stan Ballard remained cancer-free for several years, but the day after he accepted a position at Morristown West High School, doctors informed him that the cancer had returned a third time; he continued to coach basketball while wearing a morphine pump and a feeding tube; and

WHEREAS, this reoccurrence forced doctors to remove his mandible, but despite his ordeal, Stan Ballard continued to coach that year, stepping down at the end of the season, and taught for one year before reluctantly resigning at the end of the 2004 school year to focus on his health; and

WHEREAS, in the spring of 2005, Stan Ballard, 40, and his wife, Lisa, 36, returned to Vanderbilt Medical Center to face a tragic fourth reoccurrence of the cancer. The only conventional option was complete removal of the entire affected area, including his teeth and esophagus, allowing him to exist, but to no longer be able to eat or speak; instead the Ballards tried a new and aggressive chemotherapy, which required the family to travel to and stay in Houston for a week during each of the six treatments, but this form of treatment proved to be as painful as the cancer; and

WHEREAS, in September of 2005, accepting the advice of the doctor to weigh the quality of his life over the quantity, Stan Ballard made the decision to live as fully as possible in the time that was left to him; he ended his fight with the persistent monster embodied in the cancer, and he and his family began to enjoy life again, choosing to display a positive countenance and a stalwart acceptance of God's will for them; and

WHEREAS, Stan Ballard was deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, he enjoyed the loving companionship of his steadfast and devoted wife, Lisa; for Lisa, this brave and grace-filled man was her love, her husband, her darling, and her mentor, and she was blessed to share her life with him; and

WHEREAS, Stan and Lisa Ballard's two children, Micah, 14, and Chassidy, 16, have learned two essential lessons from their precious and all-too-brief time with their father: "to never give up" and that having people who love you is what is important in life, not outward appearances; and

WHEREAS, Stan Ballard is also survived by his parents, Glenn and Peggy Ballard, and two sisters, Rose Justice and Lanai Slater; and

WHEREAS, Stan Ballard's attitude of faith in spite of circumstances so impressed his colleagues that he was inducted into the Oliver Springs High School Hall of Fame on November 19, 2005, characterized as "a good Christian man with a good heart, good competitive fire, and 'a heck of a fighter'"; the coaches donated all proceeds from the Blount Today Blount County High School Basketball Jamboree to the Stan Ballard Fund, intent upon addressing Stan Ballard's deep concern that his medical bills were forcing him to leave behind a family deep in debt; and

WHEREAS, to assist in this effort, Stan Ballard's best friend since first grade, Scott Tallent, put together a fundraiser to facilitate reaching a goal of \$100,000 to honor his friend's dying wish to relieve his family of the debt incurred during his ten-year battle with cancer. Scott Tallent ultimately raised \$130,000 in the last six weeks of Stan Ballard's life, thereby exceeding the amount needed to wipe out his friend's medical bills; Scott Tallent indubitably illustrated the scripture which refers to "laying down one's life for another" by working tirelessly to answer phone calls and e-mails from across the country to raise money for the Stan Ballard Fund, all the while knowing that his friend was about to die; and

WHEREAS, Stan Ballard witnessed and appreciated the great extent to which Scott Tallent and his other friends demonstrated their love for him, remarking that he was among those fortunate enough to "actually see the end of his life"; knowing the significance of what his beloved friend had done to help his family, Stan Ballard was content to "sit back and watch God take over," and he died just a few days after the financial goal had been met; and

WHEREAS, Stan Ballard leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, the members of this legislative body, like all Tennesseans, are inspired by the positive attitude, incorruptible spirit, and mental and physical fortitude of this remarkable man; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional Christian and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED
FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE
CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Stan Ballard, reflecting fondly upon his
impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and
conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences
to the beloved family and many devoted friends of Stan Ballard.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared
for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.